

To Win the Indian Heart

MUSIC AT CHEMAWA INDIAN SCHOOL



MELISSA D. PARKHURST

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FIRST PEOPLES
New Directions in Indigenous Studies

Oregon State University Press Corvallis

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data TK

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Printed in the United States of America



Oregon State University Press
121 The Valley Library
Corvallis OR 97331-4501
541-737-3166 • fax 541-737-3170
www.osupress.oregonstate.edu

Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	000
1 The Origins of Chemawa Indian School, and Why Music Mattered	000
2 “Chemawa Always Had a Huge Band”: The School Band as Social Barometer	000
3 A Hegemonic Tool Redeemed? Chemawa’s Voices and Choirs	000
4 Private Lessons: For All, or the Talented Few?	000
5 Staging the Past, Preparing for the Future: Theater and Pageantry	000
6 Dance: From Exacting Prohibitions to an Integral Part of Campus Life	000
7 Rocking the Northwest: Chemawa’s Garage Bands	000
8 Powwow: Chemawa Students Dancing, Drumming, and Hosting	000
9 After School: Keeping the Music Going	000
<i>Notes</i>	000
<i>Bibliography</i>	000
<i>Index</i>	000

Acknowledgments

This book could not have been completed without the generous assistance of many people. I am deeply indebted to Chief Cliff Snider, my father's high school gym teacher, for bringing Chemawa to my attention in a conversation about his mother, a Chemawa alumna. Historians SuAnn Reddick and Cary C. Collins were supportive of my initial inquiries and graciously helped fill gaps in my understanding of Chemawa's history. Professors Andy Sutton, Lois Anderson, Jim Leary, Susan Cook, and Ned Blackhawk were wonderful teachers and dissertation readers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Stephen Dow Beckham at Lewis & Clark College gave me the initial encouragement that these stories should be published in book form.

My deepest gratitude and respect go to this book's consultants, the Chemawa alumni, faculty, and staff who opened their heart and homes to me, sharing their experiences and tirelessly answering my questions: Warner Austin, Linda Begay, Chet Clark, William DePoe Jr., Em Dickey, Karen Graham, Kathryn Harrison, Max Lestenkof, Ted Mack, Chance May, Rosemary McGlashen, Ted McGlashen, Millie Metcalf, Don Moccasin, Arlie Neskahi, Betty Pearson, Dee Pigsley, Bob Tom, Ted Young, the late Ed Bartlett, the late Hal Beyers, and the late Charles Holmes. Their openness and generosity propelled the work forward, and I hope the book meets some of their expectations.

The staff at OSU Press was instrumental in helping transform my manuscript from that of a novice to a more cogent, integrated work. Their support was constant and creative in every step of the process. My hearty thanks go to Mary Elizabeth Braun, Jo Alexander, Micki Reaman, and Tom Booth. Anonymous reviewers offered insightful feedback that gave the book more clarity and vigor. Steve Connell at Verse Chorus Press graciously improved the quality of the photographs and accommodated all requests for last-minute adjustments to the text and layout. Mary Harper of Access Points Indexing skillfully created an index that is functional and effective. Also, I am indebted to the First Peoples Publishing Initiative, for supporting the writing process, enabling me to attend a NAISA conference, and bringing new authors together for study and support.

Cliff Trafzer was a generous mentor, graciously reading through chapters and offering wisdom on matters both detailed and over-arching. His counsel helped

the work feel less solitary and, when a dead end presented itself, helped me find a way forward.

Fellowships and professional societies provided material support and testing grounds for new ideas. A Vilas Travel Grant from the University of Wisconsin-Madison allowed me to venture to Anchorage, Alaska, to meet with Chemawa alumni and attend a reunion. Conferences of the Society of Ethnomusicology and the Public Memory Conference at Lewis & Clark College provided encouraging and dynamic forums for portions of the book.

For assistance with the archival portions of this research, I am grateful to the Multnomah County Library, the National Archives at Seattle, the Grand Ronde Cultural Resources Division, and the Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute. The Friends of Historic Forest Grove, particularly Mary Jo Morelli, graciously helped refine my understanding of Chemawa's early history. And at the Pacific University archives, Santha Zaik and Eva Gugemos answered my questions tirelessly and connected me with precious letters, articles, and photographs.

Our community of relations in Portland, Oregon, helped in many ways. My friend and neighbor, Margaret Davis at Ma Nao Books, provided skillful editing at various phases of the manuscript's development. Philomena and John McGill offered stretches of uninterrupted writing time at their quiet second home on Washington's Long Beach Peninsula. And countless hours of caring for our son, Oliver, were gifted from our loving friends—especially Audrey Sackett, Elise Robbins, and Alison Lentz.

My family has sustained me both before and during my years of research and writing. I wish to thank my parents for developing my inquisitiveness from an early age, as well as my curiosity about Pacific Northwest history. They raised me and my sister to know that the present is infused with the past. My sister, Valerie, has been my most unwavering source of cheer and encouragement throughout the challenges of writing. My husband, David, has been my patient companion and sounding board; his material support and steadfast love made the book possible. And our toddler son, Oliver—as he grows, he may not remember the crafting of the book, but it is through him that I came to more fully understand the Chemawa parents' desires for their children to have a more expansive future, one where their gifts would be honored.

Introduction

In 1879, the fate of the Indian people in the West was yet undetermined. Many Indian groups had been recently forced onto distant, unusable lands and, facing imminent starvation, they attempted to flee. In late January, a group of Cheyenne refugees led by Chief Dull Knife broke away from their containment at Fort Robinson, Nebraska. Mounted troops followed the band of refugees into the snow, shooting at the 150 starving men, women, and children. Nearly all the escapees were quickly killed or captured.

Within a week, newspapers from San Francisco to Boston covered the Fort Robinson massacre, and the public responded passionately. An editor for the *Atlanta Constitution* proclaimed, "The affair was a brutal and inhuman massacre, a dastardly outrage upon humanity and a lasting disgrace to our boasted civilization."¹ But the Cheyenne escape proved to be only the first in a yearlong series of disastrous encounters between the government and American Indians. In late January, a small band of Poncas, led by Chief Standing Bear, escaped home to Nebraska from Oklahoma, only to be arrested and jailed.² Soon afterward, more than five hundred Northern Paiutes were forcibly moved 350 miles north, during the middle of winter, to the Yakima Reservation, with dozens of babies, young children, and elderly dying en route. In the Southwest, Warm Springs Apaches fled from their disease-ridden San Carlos Reservation, and in southern Idaho, soldiers and settlers took arms against the Bannocks, who faced starvation after their food supplies were disrupted by white settlers.

The forced, often violent transfer of frontier lands to white control continued unabated as settlers flowed steadily westward. But public opinion on the treatment of the remaining Indian groups grew increasingly circumspect as awareness of governmental abuses mounted. Given the recent series of bloody skirmishes, talk of a military solution now seemed inhumane to all but the most violently obdurate Indian hater. Even General George Crook, known for his numerous campaigns against Indians in the trans-Mississippi West, declared, "Our treatment of the Indian is an outrage."³

As the public came to identify the government's treatment of its Indian wards as unnecessarily cruel, discussions of the "Indian problem" were marked by the reappearance of an old theme: Indians not only needed to be saved from the white

man, they needed to be saved from themselves. As historian David Wallace Adams explains, "In the beginning, it was remembered, Indians had been promised the gift of civilization in exchange for their land. Indian land, for the most part, was now white land. Indians, on the other hand, were still largely savages. It was time to redeem an old promise."⁴

Amid a reform frenzy sweeping through America's upper middle class in the 1870s, a variety of political organizations concerned with the treatment of Indians emerged, including the Board of Indian Commissioners, the Boston Indian Citizenship Association, the Women's National Indian Association, and the influential Indian Rights Association. While these early reform groups did not count Indians among their members, they did share a common vision of reforming Indian policy.

The reformers were all from the upper echelons of eastern society and were almost universally guided by the tenets of evangelical Protestantism. Uplift of Indians was the fulfillment of one's Christian obligation to extend the blessings of Christianity to all the world's peoples. To this end, the reformers' efforts were animated by what historian Carl F. Kaestle has termed "the Protestant-Republican ideology." Core elements of this belief system included the sanctity of the republican polity (with its concomitant ideals of individualism, liberty, and virtue), personal industry, social mobility made possible through individual character, a respected but carefully circumscribed domestic role for women, the social virtues of property ownership, the grandeur of America's destiny, and the necessity of a concerted public effort (i.e., education) by which to unify America's polyglot population.⁵

Philanthropists alighted on the idea of "civilization" as a shorthand method for referring to these numerous values. Because Indian ways differed from those of whites, Indians were deemed to be the less civilized. So that Indians might reap the benefits of civilization, the Indian organizations lobbied for several distinct but related reforms. Reservations were a gross impediment to assimilation and had to be dismantled; this ongoing process was codified through the 1887 Dawes Act, which constructed a system for dispersing tribal lands to individual Indians, thus divesting the tribes of their land holdings. Tribal legal systems were deemed insufficient, savage, and backward; to extend the protection of the nation's legal system to Indians, Congress created an Indian police force in 1878 and in 1883 Indian courts wherein minor crimes such as "participation in heathenish dances" might be addressed. But of greatest importance to the reformers' agenda, for its presumed power to reach into the psyches of Indian youths and ensure the assimilation of future generations, was the need for education reform.

Arguments for Indian education rested on the premise that for lasting

assimilation to take place, young Indians had to be taught the values, mores, and knowledge of Christian civilization. Older Indians were deemed incapable of becoming civilized; at best they could be “tamed,” and hence finite resources should be allocated more effectively to the young. Most reformers adhered to an idea of social evolution similar to that put forth in Lewis Henry Morgan’s 1877 treatise, *Ancient Society: Or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery Through Barbarism to Civilization*, and in turn reasoned that education could exponentially quicken the process of cultural evolution. Thomas J. Morgan, Commissioner of Indian Affairs from 1889 to 1893, argued that “a good school may thus bridge over for them the dreary chasm of a thousand years of tedious evolution.”⁶

Reformers also couched their arguments in terms of economic prudence. Secretary of the Interior Carl Schurz estimated that it cost nearly \$1 million to kill an Indian in warfare, whereas it cost only \$1,200 to put an Indian child through eight years of schooling.⁷ Education could, in effect, augment the country’s natural resources as well, since assimilation could be exploited to help dislodge tribal people from their vast landholdings. As a means of inducing Indians to cast off tribal ways and learn to operate within Euro-American society, education made sense on a variety of levels. For reformers, assimilation seemed to require nothing short of total identity transformation. To effect a complete transformation of Indian identities, education appeared a vital and indisputable moral imperative.

Indian people, however, likely did not share such a grand, all-encompassing vision of education; assimilation and identity were distinct ideas, a change in one not ensuring a transformation of the other. Many Indians accepted assimilation as an attainable or even desirable outcome that could be pursued without diminishing their Indian identity. They could selectively embrace parts of American society and still maintain a clear sense of themselves as Indians. Moreover, Indians often experienced attempts at education and land reform that left them segregated and isolated, and further prevented their full participation in American society. Historian Cary C. Collins has characterized the relationship between the national government and the Indian people: “The federal presence, ubiquitous and intrusive, enveloped Indian Country, seeking a victory of assimilation at any cost and wreaking enormous havoc on everyone and everything it touched, Indian and white alike. Equally debilitating to both patient and doctor, the encounter diminished each.”⁸

But reformers in the late nineteenth century remained optimistic that the federal government’s assumption of a parental role in the education of Indians would humanely offer them a chance for survival in the modern world. Prevailing ethnocentric appraisals of the Indian peoples’ collective future were bleak, with

many well-meaning Indian reformers warning that the alternative to total assimilation was total obliteration or, perhaps worse, the Indians' endless suffering in a status of inferiority and subordination relative to the non-Indian population.

To save the Indians, policy makers would need to accomplish their process of social reconditioning quickly, within one or two generations. Thanks to the far-reaching efforts of missionary-run schools dating back to colonial times,⁹ a variety of models for Indian education existed. Which might promise the best chance of rapid assimilation?

The kind of complete transformation envisioned by federal policy makers required more than academic and vocational instruction, however successful these might be in preparing students for trades and domestic labor. For civilization to really take hold in Indian communities, the students' interior lives and emotional allegiances had to be remade as well. Music instruction promised to fill the vital role of replacing the "heathenish" pleasures of Indian ceremonial activities with more acceptable pastimes that would reinforce Anglo-European social customs. By breaking up the otherwise grim life of prayer, work, and study, school officials hoped musical activities would be sufficiently compelling that students might be more amenable to and complete in their conversion to civilization.

School songs were memorized in music class and sung en masse at student assemblies, and such songs often encapsulated a school's goals and teaching philosophy. The following school song, in use at Chilocco (near Ponca, Oklahoma) in 1906, embodies the intrusive parental role assumed by the school in its effort to control Indian bodies, thoughts, and spirits.

There once did live an Indian youth
 His tribe Chey-Sioux-Chip-Pot-Jo
 His Uncle Sam said—which was the truth,
 "To school you ought to go, LO"
 So he left the reservation
 Left it far behind
 Came to seek an education
 To soothe his savage mind
 Learned to cultivate the land;
 Learned how to keep accounts correctly,
 Head applied to hand.

There also lived an Indian maid
 Her tribe O-winne-paw-pa;

Her Uncle Sam said, and was obeyed,
 "To School, my Minnehaha."
 So she left the reservation
 Left it far behind
 Came to seek an education
 To soothe her savage mind
 Came to study at Chilocco
 Learned to sew and bake good bread
 Learned to keep a home in order
 Hands controlled by head.¹⁰

In addition to repertoires of school songs that were known to entire campus communities, extracurricular activities offered various forms of music instruction to students who were interested in music or were advised by their teachers and administrators to pursue it. Marching bands, orchestras, dance clubs, drill teams, theater troupes, and glee clubs all offered forms of entertainment and self-development that were deemed acceptable by school administrators.

Extracurricular music activities fulfilled the goals of federal Indian policy by strategically using music to inculcate patriotism and a national identity. By reinforcing Anglo-European artistic sensibilities, school officials sought to erase Indian culture and history from students' memories. Students were taught "safer" forms of music than those of reservation life, and nationalistic musical pageants such as "Columbia's Roll Call" were devised to steep students in the mythologies of colonial America. Music quickly became a feature touted by school officials and maligned by critics of Indian schools, who acknowledged music's power to entice students into potentially dangerous environments. After learning of the scandalously high death rates among students in many boarding schools by the late 1890s, Indian Inspector William J. McConnell conveyed his alarm to Secretary of the Interior Ethan Hitchcock: "We are little less than murderers if we follow the course we are now following after the attention of those in charge has been called to its fatal results. Hundreds of boys and girls are sent home to die that a sickly sentiment may be patronized and that institutions where brass bands, foot and base ball are the principal advertisements may be maintained."¹¹

In the early years of the boarding schools, teachers' and administrators' journals and letters reveal a pervasive fear of tribal music. Administrators deduced that running away from school, a common expression of student resistance, was provoked by the combination of "the roving disposition" and "the sound of drums reverberating against the mountains."¹² School officials thus perceived tribal sounds as insidious; they noted that even when a boarding school was

walled up, guarded, and surrounded by a tall fence, music could still penetrate the compound. During a measles epidemic at the agency boarding school in Fort Defiance, Arizona, some parents succeeded in collecting their sick children for treatment at home, and the school staff listened anxiously to the “tom-tom and the barbarous howl of the medicine man at night, and the death wail from the same wickiup in the morning.”¹³ For many school officials, tribal music represented the unknown, the wild, the disorderly, the un-Christian, and possibly the dangerous. Even accounts given by more progressive teachers are notable for their savage depictions of tribal sounds. Flora Gregg Iloff, superintendent at Truxton Canyon, Arizona, recalled seeing Don, one of her prized older students, dancing at a late-night Walapi curing ceremony she attended:

The muscles of his face were drawn in tight ridges, sweat rolled down his cheeks and dripped from his chin; his eyes were those of an Indian, a fanatical Indian, straining with all that was in him to lay hands on that magic power. He would support with the last breath of his life that thin, mummified zealot that sucked and gurgled and screamed in a wild frenzy. And I wondered, “Tomorrow will he stand in front of his company at school and give his commands to his boys? Will he sit at the head of his table in the dining room and help serve the younger children? Tonight he is steeped in Indian tradition. Can he change by the time the breakfast bell rings in the morning?”¹⁴

Superintendent Iloff ultimately departed mid-ceremony, around three in the morning, panic-stricken.

A common lament among teachers was the special problem posed by tribal dances held off school grounds, which caused a buzz among the students and distracted them from their studies. The boarding schools’ mission of identity transformation was compromised, and teachers believed that, after a dance, students would take days or even weeks to resume their regular work.¹⁵ From the perspective of the teachers, tribal musics carried degenerative potential, creating unproductive students and thwarting organized education.

The students, however, were not savages, but emissaries from societies with cultures that were sophisticated and viable. Though early sources regarding students’ opinions of music in school are fragmentary, we can glimpse some of their experiences through passages in autobiographies, letters, interviews, and oral histories, plus find clues in federal records, albeit mediated by non-Indian authors. Collecting anecdotes from around the boarding school system, we know

that some students continued to practice their tribal musics, dances, and rituals secretly, while publicly embracing the school-sponsored programs that administrators had designed to engage the Native heart. Secret participation in such activities as stomp dances and peyote rituals was self-selective and often tribe-specific. For example, while groups of Creek and Cherokee students at Chilocco Indian School sometimes ventured to a nearby field to do stomp dances together, one Eastern Cherokee alumna confessed, "There's nothing in this world that will put me to sleep faster than a stomp dance . . . these Cherokees are so *colorless*, they have no feathers, no nothing . . . so now for our celebration every year we have the Plains Indians, now they can really get it on."¹⁶

Some students came to regard music classes as the saving grace of boarding school life; Fort Defiance alumna Irene Steward recalls discovering the "unexpected joys" of school life in fifth grade when she developed a talent for singing, lost some of her shyness, and enjoyed participating in the school's holiday programs.¹⁷ Many students brought humor to bear on their newly learned music skills, as a way of coping with the disheartening day-to-day realities of boarding school; girls at one school acknowledged their inadequate food rations by composing such jingles as "Too much government gravy / Make me lazy."¹⁸ Other students found the regimentation that was deeply engrained through daily dress parades to be stifling and downright embarrassing. Anna Moore Shaw, who attended Phoenix Indian School, resented the cadence of military marching that had become indelibly engrained in her own gait.

At first the marching seemed so hard to learn, but once we had mastered the knack, we couldn't break the habit. Sometimes on our once-a-month visit to town, a talking machine would be blasting band music outside a store to attract customers. Then we girls would go into our act; try as hard as we could, we just couldn't get out of step. It was impossible! We'd try to take long strides to break the rhythm, but soon we would fall back into step again. How embarrassing it was!¹⁹

For a few students, music instruction paved the way for professional success. Yakama vocalist and Haskell alumnus Kiutus Tecumseh became a celebrated tenor following World War I; Pima trombonist Russell Moore (known as "Big Chief" Moore) graduated from the Sherman Institute to tour with Lionel Hampton, Louis Armstrong, and his own Powwow Jazz Band; and Lakota student Gertrude Simmons Bonnin (Zitkala-sá) toured to the 1900 Paris Exposition as a violin soloist with the Carlisle Band, later parlaying her celebrity into a long career in

Indian policy reform. Responding to their boarding school music experiences in individual ways, students put the training to their own social, political, and economic uses.

For students' families, as well, music represented many things. Letters that students sent home reveal this diversity. Rip Van Winkle, a Navajo student whom agents had forcibly enrolled at the boarding school in Grand Junction, Colorado, staged a letter-writing campaign that eventually succeeded in securing his release. In a letter to his brother, his favorable reference to the school's band music stands out in stark contrast to his isolation:

March 28, 1894

Dear Brother Will Price

I am going to write to you this afternoon. I stay house and three day. I dont feel better every day. I dont think stay here but I like go home this summer. I am very sorry all time and the boys march with the brass band and I think them play pretty good. I do not like to stay here because the superintendent don't like the navajo boys. I will ask him if I can go home summer. If he dont let me go, I will runaway from him. He told me. He said put me guard house and stay four day said that. if you will write *to me* again.

from your brother

Rip Van Winkle²⁰

For some families, enrolling a child in boarding school was a conscious and deliberate choice, and parents often regarded music instruction as one of the schools' primary selling points. A father from South Dakota with two children at Flandreau wrote that he wanted to "see that Raymond works in the carpentry shop all winter," but he also stipulated that his daughter Phoebe learn music by having "lessons on the piano."²¹ Another Flandreau parent, viewing music as an integral part of his sons' total education, wrote to request that his boys "take lessons of violin and also keep on in training as farmers."²²

Some students wrote their own letters of application, as did George White Bull. In his request for enrollment at Flandreau, he uses his experience in a band as his opening argument for admission.

I am going to write to you and asked you how I can come to school and so wish you would give me the proportion to come I play in band for two or three years and I'm just in fifth grade and I am very glad to learned little more if I can I have looked over all the

non-reservation school but I dont think I can go any wheres but to come over to your Flandreau Indian School as I thought this School will give me a little more education so that I can make an honest living when I get out. I know several Indian boys from here that had been there before and as they tell me about how the School is over there and so I thought I will get my learning from you Well Sir I wish you would kindly send me some blanks so that I can fill them up The very first time I want to do when I get over there is to join the band.²³

Occasionally, students were descended from families with multigenerational legacies of musicians; such families often used the boarding schools as a way of ensuring that the musical training their children had begun at home would continue. Later in the boarding school era, some families were reluctant to enroll their children without some assurance that their own tribal cultures would be taught alongside the non-Native. If parents judged that tribal ways were neglected or denigrated in the schools, they often pulled their children from enrollment.

The phenomenon of “Indian Clubs” emerged on school campuses in the 1930s²⁴ as a way for schools to combat parental resistance by honoring students’ tribal heritages. The tellingly named “Indian Clubs” were an outlet for Native dress, music, dance, and ceremony that was supervised and deemed safe by school administrators. At a time when many Indian groups had been dispersed and driven from their ancestral lands, many students welcomed a chance to research their background and tribal heritage, and it became a popular campus activity. One San Juan Pueblo student at Santa Fe Indian School reflected, “I don’t think I appreciated my Indianness until I . . . became a senior in high school, when we had our Indian Club here, and I joined the Indian Club.”²⁵

As students learned to perform dances and songs from tribes other than their own, they took new songs and dances back to their communities, cultivating intertribal ties among boarding school students and their families. Boarding schools would prove themselves hotbeds for traditional arts, syncretism, and cultural exchange.²⁶ This history of sharing has been particularly pronounced at the longest-operating boarding school in the federal system, Chemawa Indian School, located four miles north of Salem, Oregon.

This book consists of nine chapters that explore the principal forms of music making that Chemawa students have engaged in from the school’s establishment in 1880 through the present day. Organized by genre, the chapters overlap in the span of time each covers; together, they form a multi-layered account of music in

campus life and its changing meanings for individual students, faculty and staff, school administrators, and families.

Chapter 1 opens with a Haida creation story as an invitation to consider the fundamental ways music has always been important to Indian people. This chapter then recounts the complex events that led to the establishment of Chemawa Indian School, and why Office of Indian Affairs officials deemed the practice of music—with its performance of both Indianness and whiteness—pivotal to their assimilation campaign.

Chapter 2 explores the school band—the juggernaut of the residential school's music program—as a social barometer, chronicling changes in the membership, repertoire, and functions of the band over the course of Chemawa's history. Military-style bands that were used to instill order and obedience for the entire student body gradually gave way to more diverse repertoires and the inclusion of female musicians. Alaska Natives in particular often arrived at Chemawa familiar with brass band instruments; at many Alaska villages, Native communities had already established their own brass bands.

Chapter 3 considers Chemawa's student singers and choirs, and the fundamental conflict between pedagogical approaches that emphasized music instruction for *all* students versus music instruction for the talented few. Choirs and small vocal ensembles were a key part of the school's public relations campaign, and students chosen to participate functioned as public ambassadors to the off-campus community.

Chapter 4 examines the extension of private lessons to students who were deemed talented, and the transition from the unbridled optimism of early reformers to the more qualified version of equality expounded after the turn of the century. This chapter also chronicles the colorful and complex life histories of two famous Chemawa musicians, Will DePoe and Spade Cooley.

Chapter 5 considers the role of theater and pageants in shaping campus life and student identity. Originally mounted for their perceived ability to inculcate students with the virtues of patriotism, Christianity, and civilization, the early dramatic productions eventually gave way to the performance of dances and stories from students' tribal communities. Supervised by staff and faculty members, students exchanged expressive culture, participated in each other's dances, and strengthened town-gown relations between Chemawa and the greater Salem community.

Chapter 6 charts the various forms of dance that Chemawa students have engaged in, first assessing governmental prohibitions of Indian dances and ceremonies and highlighting how these prohibitions were employed in western Oregon. The progressive reforms of Commissioner John Collier allowed for students to

practice some tribal dances as well as Euro-American social dance forms, through which students learned prescribed social etiquette and gender norms.

Chapter 7 examines the historically recent phenomenon of garage bands, and how a group of Chemawa students chose to be active players in this regional trend. It identifies new ways student musicians have expressed themselves individually and collectively, and profiles The Meteors, a Chemawa garage band that met with considerable professional success.

Chapter 8 explores the unique role of powwows at residential schools, and the implications for the dynamic processes of identity formation, intertribalism, and cultural revitalization. Participation in traditional performing arts at Chemawa has become largely student-driven, and the students who choose to participate often return home to form drum groups or otherwise transmit their knowledge to youth in their tribal communities.

Chapter 9 returns the focus of the book to resiliency and the ability to bounce back from adversity—a necessary skill for all boarding school attendees. It invites consideration of Chemawa musicians' diverse life paths as proof of the ways that the students' musical involvement has supported their later successes in personal growth, work, relationships, and service to their communities.

Chemawa's founding was predicated on the erasure of all aspects of students' culture, language, traditional beliefs, spirituality, and connection to their tribal communities. Music was a critical component of this assimilation campaign, for its perceived ability to reach the hearts of Indian children and enable the total transformation sought by social reformers. One hundred and thirty years later, music is now used in the service of a new mission for Chemawa, one that recognizes "the oneness of all indigenous people, tribal self-determination, and respect for the inter-relatedness of all peoples and life."²⁷ The form of cultural expression that policy makers had pinned such high hopes on for its promise to reach the Indian heart became *not* a tool for mindless assimilation, but a way for Indian students to define themselves, to create social networks, and to gain the competencies that would promote their own resiliency both during their time at Chemawa and afterwards. How this remarkable change came about is the subject of this book.

Chapter 1

The Origins of Chemawa Indian School, and Why Music Mattered

Raven and the First Human Beings

Everyone knows that a long time ago, the world was covered by a gigantic flood. It covered up islands, shores and even many of the mountains. Eventually, the flood receded. Raven was flying around, happy that the floodwaters were gone. He was bored with a waterlogged world. So he was out there, flying around, flying around. Finally hungry Raven landed on a beach and began looking for good things to eat. Raven hopped and flapped along the seashore. From a distance, as Raven hopped along the beach, he spied a gigantic clamshell. Always interested in anything new or different, Raven waddled over to the shell. He heard strange sounds coming from that clamshell-little squeaks and funny noises: “Yakity, yak-yak.” He had never heard such sounds coming from a clamshell before. He cocked his head and fixed his shiny black eye on the shell.

Raven was curious to find out what was inside the clam shell, but he knew that he would have to soothe its fears, whatever it was. Raven has a beautiful voice: He can croon and sound like a beautiful bell. He can sing and make pleasant and reassuring sounds, comforting sounds, sounds that bring joy to any heart. So Raven decided to sing to the clamshell. He sang a song that sounded like gurgling and happy water. After his song, he called out to the shell, “Come out, whatever you are, whoever you are. Come out. I am Raven, Creator of the World, and I will not hurt you. Please come out and play with me. The flood is over; I have given light to the world. Please come out and we will play together.” Again Raven sang. Raven is not only the Maker of Things, not only the Transformer; he is also a Magician and a Healer. His singing contains magic and his voice, while sometimes annoying when he is hungry or frightening when he is angry, can also be lulling and soothing.

Finally, the clamshell opened, and a little being with long black hair, a round head, and brown, smooth skin popped out. Raven looked at his creature, with two legs like himself (but no feathers) and two arms and two hands: a very puny and scrawny being. Raven heard the murmur of other voices in the shell. Because he didn't want to scare the little thing, he continued singing, and he called the others out. Slowly, these little creatures emerged from the clamshell and onto the beach of what is today called British Columbia. These beings were the ancestral Haida.

"Come and play in my beautiful world, a world with warm, rich sunshine and sounding seas and dark nights for telling stories and sleeping. Come and play with me, and we will eat salmon and berries and all types of good things," Raven sang to the First People. At first, the People were frightened and bewildered. They were frightened of the sea-noise, the crashing of waves against rocks, and the pounding of the surf. They were frightened by the sound and movement of the wind. They were frightened by the darkness and size of Raven; they were afraid Raven might eat them. But slowly, one by one, they emerged and played with Raven and ate the delicacies he brought to share with them.¹

Music has always been of vital importance to Indian people. For some Native groups, their very creation is predicated on it. The Hopi gods sang the world into being; the spirits that would become the Modoc people first gathered in the underground world to sing and dance; and for some tribes in the Pacific Northwest, Raven sang a song of greeting to the first people as they emerged from a clam shell. In effect, Raven used his voice to sing the first people into existence.

For children at Chemawa Indian school, the Raven story holds striking parallels and contrasts. Emerging from their tribal communities into the new world of the school, some children liked what they heard, others decidedly did not. The song of the reality of residential school life emerged regardless. Some students embraced it, and others did not. Most integrated parts of it into their identities, and discarded or left alone other parts that did not prove useful. Regarding their musical knowledge, all students arrived at Chemawa with backgrounds in music acquired through years of life experience. The students did not arrive without a song.

The goal of assimilationist reformers, then, was not to bring music to an unmusical people—though some reformers no doubt viewed their pedagogic aspirations in this manner. The reformers' real purpose was to replace the Indians' existing cultural life with a new one befitting a Christian, civilized, de-Indianized

people. Indian people already had music; they just had the *wrong* music—music that was deemed uncivilized, savage, steeped in barbarism, and even prone to lead the practitioner towards Satan. Eventually, federally sponsored reformers would seek to rectify this most thoroughly by means of the curricula and campus life of off-reservation residential schools, but the first groups of reformers to attempt this task were church missionary societies.

In 1824, Indians of the Pacific Northwest first experienced a formal boarding school education at the Red River School at Fort Garry (now Winnipeg, Manitoba). Anglican Reverend David T. Jones and Governor George Simpson, of the Northern Division of the Hudson's Bay Company, agreed that the school's opening mandate was to bring thirty children from tribes across the continent to be educated at Red River. Operated by the Church of England's Church Missionary Society, the school sought to provide an education that missionaries considered similar to that of an English boarding school, with English-language instruction in European history, geography, agriculture, and "white man's ways," bracketed by morning and evening prayer. Students sang hymns and learned to read the Bible and the *Book of Common Prayer*. The first groups of students included the sons of Spokane, Flathead, and Kootenai chiefs, as well as the sons of HBC fur traders who had married Indian wives (one wife being the daughter of Chinook Chief Concomly). As the Red River School and its surrounding community grew, many of the Métis alumni and families left to make new homes in the Willamette Valley, some in clusters around French Prairie and Forest Grove. One graduate of the Red River School, Garry (the son of a Spokane chief), established an Indian-run school in Spokane in 1832, where Indian people from around the region came to learn Christianity, English, and basic agriculture.

Missionaries in the United States observed these early successes and were inspired to attempt ventures of their own. In 1835, Methodist missionary Jason Lee and his nephew built a twenty-by-thirty-foot log structure to house Oregon Country's first Methodist Episcopal Indian manual labor school. Located at French Prairie in an area known as Chemaway, the log house functioned not only as the precursor to Chemawa School but also as a church and hospital until it was washed into the Willamette River during the flood of 1841. The following year, Lee convinced the Mission Board to invest \$40,000 in the construction of a new school at Chemeketa (now Salem). Rather than enrolling the "one to three hundred children" that he had promised the school would serve, however, Lee retained only twenty-three "scholars," using the bulk of the Mission Board's funding to secure valuable real estate, possibly to further colonization at a time when Oregon was still a contested territory. Reverend George Gary, whom the Mission Board sent as Lee's replacement, reported after arriving at Chemeketa

that "some of them [the students] have run away and many have died. The dead have been decently buried. Runaways have been punished as criminals." Gary admitted to "blush at the information" that "the most of them have taken their stolen budget and when found have been brought back, put in chains, severely whipped . . . and guarded and kept within a high enclosure, like prisoners."² Gary sold the campus property and transferred the school at Chemeketa to the Oregon Institute, which operates today as Willamette University.³

Over the next three decades, missionary efforts continued in the form of small schools scattered throughout the Northwest. Despite Indian Commissioner T. Hartley Crawford's advocacy in 1938 of "establishing a large central school for the education of Western Indians,"⁴ federal efforts at Indian education in the Northwest consisted mainly of subsidies for the various mission schools, eventually codified under the Grant Peace Plan in the 1860s.⁵ Through the efforts of missionaries, reservation day schools became scattered throughout the West, with forty-eight already in existence by the era of the American Civil War.

In the Pacific Northwest, treaties negotiated with the Indians during the 1850s displaced the Willamette Valley tribes to the Coastal and Grand Ronde reservations. Pacific Northwest treaties often included promises of educational support, stipulating that vocational schools would be established with no-cost enrollment for the children of the signatory tribes. The Medicine Creek Treaty of 1854, for example, promised to Nisqually, Squaxin, Puyallup, and Steilacoom tribes that an agricultural and industrial school would be "free to the children of said tribes for a period of twenty years," with school expenses covered by the federal government and not deducted from annuities; the Treaty of Point Elliot, signed by tribes in the greater Puget Sound region in 1855, contains a similar clause, promising "to furnish them with schools, teachers, farmers and farming implements, blacksmiths, and carpenter, with shops of those trades." While the United States did not fully fulfill these articles, they did provide limited funding for day schools. Such schools were relatively inexpensive to operate, and engendered little parental resistance, but did not prove to be effective instruments of civilization. Much to the schoolteachers' consternation, the lessons, manners, and values taught in the five-hour school day were negated each evening by the realities of camp life. One Indian agent disgustingly summarized his day school's progress as of 1879: The natives seemed "content and happy; happy in their degradation and filthiness; seemingly content to remain as they are with little ambition to change for the better."⁶ Had he attempted to sing Native songs with tribal leaders and women, other outcomes might have been possible. But white bias, combined with a lack of understanding of Native languages, culture, and religion, could yield no success. In such an environment, a day school was ineffectual at best.

Reservation boarding schools appeared as a promising alternative to day schools, with students only returning home during the summer vacation period, and in some instances over the Christmas holidays. In the Pacific Northwest, missionary-run schools at the Colville and Tulalip reservations eventually received federal funding as contract Indian schools, for which the government provided annual funds to maintain the buildings while the Catholic Church furnished books, clothing, housing, and medical care. Even after Congress gutted the contract Indian school program in 1896, these two schools persisted as federal facilities, offering education through the 8th-grade level.⁷ The children ranged in age from six to eighteen, and they hailed from a variety of Indian communities that lived both on and off reservations.

A recurring phenomenon emerged, however, which alarmed and aggravated schoolteachers and administrators: the relapse. After going home for the summer, children tended to slough off their newly acquired habits of civilization in favor of more engrained, familial tribal ways. Indian parents also persisted in visiting their children at school. Seasonal camps were set up immediately outside the school grounds, facilitating student-family communication that subverted the efforts of the schools. One Indian agent explained, "Members of the tribe daily visit the school to its detriment in many ways, notably in retarding English speaking by the pupils, in persuading the children to run away, or to refrain from performing their allotted work, or in giving notice of the time of dances and their whereabouts to the pupils."⁸ Dances were a common threat to the process of identity transformation; another agent explained, "A dance is announced a week in advance, and at once you see the young mind reveling in the thought until study and all thoughts of books are driven out and nothing but Indian remains, and weeks pass before the scholars get back to their regular work."⁹

As the day schools and reservation boarding schools, which were within visiting distance of the students' homes, developed patterns of shortcomings and complications, policy makers sought a more effective instrument of assimilation. Clearly, a higher degree of institutional hegemony was needed for a child to undergo the desired transformation. At this opportune moment an educational experimentalist emerged in the form of Captain Richard Henry Pratt, an army officer turned educator. In April 1878, he had been charged with the guardianship of seventy-two young Cheyenne, Kiowa, Comanche, Arapaho, and Caddo prisoners, Pratt had successfully transported them to Virginia and enrolled them as students at Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, a school for African Americans.¹⁰ Encouraged by his experiences at Hampton, Pratt sought funding from Congress to establish a federal residential school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, with the goal of assimilating Indian children by completely submersing them in

Table 1: Locations and Opening Dates for Off-reservation Boarding Schools (from Adams 1995:57)

Location of School	Date Opened		
Carlisle, Pennsylvania	1879	Fort Lewis, Colorado	1892
Chemawa, Oregon	1880	Fort Shaw, Montana	1892
Chilocco, Oklahoma	1884	Flandreau, South Dakota	1893
Genoa, Nebraska	1884	Pipestone, Minnesota	1893
Albuquerque, New Mexico	1884	Mount Pleasant, Michigan	1893
Lawrence, Kansas	1884	Tomah, Wisconsin	1893
Grand Junction, Colorado	1886	Wittenberg, Wisconsin	1895
Santa Fe, New Mexico	1890	Greenville, California	1895
Fort Mojave, Arizona	1890	Morris, Minnesota	1897
Carson, Nevada	1890	Chamberlain, South Dakota	1898
Pierre, South Dakota	1891	Fort Bidwell, California	1898
Phoenix, Arizona	1891	Rapid City, South Dakota	1898
		Riverside, California	1902

the white man's world. "In Indian civilization," Pratt contended, "I am a Baptist, because I believe in immersing the Indians in our civilization and when we get them under holding them there until they are thoroughly soaked."¹¹ Congress approved, and within two decades, an extensive off-reservation boarding school system was established, with twenty-five schools scattered across the country, mostly concentrated in the recently settled western states.

Earlier boarding schools had been located within visiting distances of the students' villages, but the more ambitious, modern government school system transported many students to school from halfway across the continent. Memoirs of Indian writers from the assimilation era (defined by historian Frederick E. Hoxie as 1880 to 1920) contain vivid descriptions of the enrollment process. Luther Standing Bear recalls being rounded up and loaded onto a train with no explanation, with even the older boys so frightened that they began to sing the death songs of Sioux warriors approaching battle.¹² Once students arrived at their schools, they were given new names. As Omaha writer Francis La Flesche recalls in his boarding school memoir, "The aboriginal names were considered by the missionaries heathenish . . . in the place of Tae-noo-ga-wa-zhe came Philip Sheridan; in that of Wa-pah-dae . . . Jonathon."¹³ Music programs were a prominent feature at all the schools, and new students quickly encountered choirs, bands, dress parades, and football games.

A peculiar set of regimented experiences became common to students throughout the boarding school system. Newly enrolled students all received haircuts upon arrival, boys' hair clipped close to the skull. School administrators forbade

the speaking of native languages, often under the threat of physical punishment. A typical daily routine followed a strict schedule of classes, work periods, study hall, prayer times, housekeeping, and recesses. Most schools had extensive working farms and vocational units, and the costs of keeping these up—as well as the costs of the kitchen, laundry, and campus infrastructure—were defrayed by the use of student labor. Some students went to boarding school expressly to learn trades, including music, both for their future livelihoods and personal enjoyment.

As their time in school lengthened from weeks to years, students exhibited markedly varied reactions to the new regimes. Some flourished and grew into compelling Indian activists who credited their success to their education. Some found the harsh treatment and separation from home untenable and ran away as soon as possible, only to be apprehended and returned to the school to await the next chance for escape. Others learned prodigiously yet returned home upon graduation to find that there was no place for them in their communities of origin, where prejudice against those perceived as having forsaken their Indian identities could sometimes lead to subtle taunting or outright ostracizing.

Despite their youth and the intensity of the boarding school indoctrination process, most Indian students were loath to give up their tribal ways. Songs, languages, and rituals continued clandestinely as students struggled to remember home and find security in a strange new world. Paradoxically, the remote locations of boarding schools, meant to speed indoctrination, also resulted in the mixing together of students from a variety of Indian groups. The students quickly realized that, contrasting cultures notwithstanding, they shared many common interests and experiences simply by virtue of being Indians.

Students learned songs and music from each other, and the intertribal bonds that would later facilitate many Indian groups' struggles for justice, federal recognition, and restoration were forged through these processes of acculturation. While *assimilation* implies conformity and the one-way transmittal of knowledge, *acculturation* allows for selective adoption, multidirectional sharing, and polyvalent meanings of cultural phenomena. Broadly defined by American dictionaries as "the adoption of the traits or patterns of another group," the idea of acculturation engenders a more accurate appraisal of how elements of culture were creatively shared, accepted, or rejected by players in the boarding school system—students, faculty, and staff alike—with all parties transformed in the process. Policy makers never anticipated that Indian students would actively participate in the acculturation drama, but faculty and staff working in the schools saw that student responses proved far less predictable than had been assumed. Understanding the complex, multidirectional cultural work that has taken place at boarding schools requires a sharper notion of acculturation, one

where “acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups.”¹⁴ Moreover, when people from different cultures interact, the process of acculturation is inescapable and necessarily involves all parties, all the time. No one can remain unchanged by an interaction, be it as fleeting as an algebra lecture or as momentous as the weeks of campus preparation for an Indian Day pageant. Despite the profoundly deleterious effects of assimilationist education policies and the undeniable cultural losses wreaked by the boarding schools, staff memoirs reveal periodic changes in their understandings of the acculturation process,¹⁵ and students drew unanticipated strength from the bonds they formed with each other.

As Lieutenant Richard Henry Pratt was establishing his school at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in 1879, Interior Secretary Carl Schurz also allotted funds for the establishment of a parallel boarding school to be located on the West Coast. Army Captain Melville Cary Wilkinson, inspired by the efforts of fellow Congregationalist General Oliver Otis Howard in establishing the Freedmen’s Bureau and offering education to former slaves, was new to the Indian service, and was an ardent assimilationist with a passion for Indian education. Wilkinson was already living in Oregon, serving under General Howard’s command at the Department of Columbia. Federal law prohibited army officers from holding civilian positions, however, except for certain loopholes, such as being appointed a military instructor at an established college. Wilkinson received just such an appointment, as professor of military science and tactics at Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon. Multiple factors rendered Forest Grove an ideal site for the Indian school: Sydney Harper Marsh, the president of Pacific University, was a great-grandson of Eleazor Wheelock, who had founded Dartmouth University as an early trial of Indian boarding school training. Missionaries Elkanah and Mary Richardson Walker, who had established the Tsimakain Mission for the Spokane in 1839, now lived in Forest Grove and were active in the life of Pacific University. Also, Forest Grove was a dry town, helping create a moral climate that federal officials believed would support their attempted transformation of Indian lifeways. In February 1880, Wilkinson recruited eighteen Indian boys from the Puyallup Reservation in Washington Territory to establish a new school at Forest Grove.

Using \$5,000 of appropriations, Wilkinson oversaw the construction of Forest Grove Indian Industrial and Training School by the hands of the students themselves on four acres of land loaned by Pacific University. The school would operate as an instrument for assimilation, with Western music—in the form of Christian

hymns and marching band music—as an integral part of its curriculum. Once the dormitories were completed, Wilkinson began recruiting female students as well, and by October 1881 he reported having the school “filled to one more than the maximum allowed: seventy-six students from Puyallup, Warm Springs, Wasco, Piute, Pitt River, Spokane, Chehalis, Nesqually, and Oyster Bay Agencies.”¹⁶

Photographs of the students, taken both before and after their enrollment, were used as part of a public relations campaign to create a lasting, tangible sense of the transformation that the school might produce. Figure 1 shows Spokane students who had just arrived at Forest Grove in 1881, and the same students seven months later. Five of this group were dead by February 1888.

These images highlight the school’s overtly stated purpose of assimilation. In reality, the students acculturated instead, taking *some* aspects of the new education into their lives. They remained Indian people, adding new elements like the knowledge of Western music; in doing so, they embraced acculturation rather than assimilation.

While instructors at Forest Grove focused their school curriculum on vocational instruction, with students learning farming and other forms of manual labor, part of the day was devoted to traditional academics, taught from a stridently Euro-American perspective. Wilkinson considered Forest Grove’s geographic isolation from tribal communities a “bonus,” and believed that education could proceed effectively only if the students were made to shed their Native identity. He reported on his progress and strategies, summing up: “Pushing general Indian Education rapidly and to successful issue.” Affirming his deep personal commitment to the process, he explained that effective transformation “can not be done at the end of a pair of tongs nor by those who have an idea that their Creator must have made a mistake in creating this race.” He sought to divest students of their Indianness by attacking the most fundamental aspects of identity, mandating that “the final rule here, after cleanliness and obedience, is no Indian talk. The delegations, from different tribes, are divided and subdivided, until all tribal associations are broken up or lost.”¹⁷ “No Indian talk” included a ban on the singing of traditional Indian songs.

While the United States government strove to provide formal education for Indians, it simultaneously waged wars against the last groups of resistant Indians. Wilkinson returned to his regiment in July of 1882, and Ojibwe Indians eventually killed him in a skirmish between U.S. soldiers and the Bear Island band of Ojibwe at Leech Lake, Minnesota in 1898.¹⁸

The school at Forest Grove continued to expand despite its scant farmland and building space. With no prospects of further expansion at Pacific University, a fire that destroyed the girls’ dormitory in 1885 allowed the school to relocate.



Figure 1. Spokane Indians, as new boarding school students and again seven months later. Though not individually identified in the photos, they included James George, Florence Hayes, Garfield Hayes, Louis Isaacs, Eunice Madge James, Julia Jopps, Martha Lot, Frank Rice, Ben Secup, Susette Susan Secup, and Alice L. Williams. Photos by I. G. Davidson. Courtesy of Pacific University Archives, Forest Grove, Oregon.

Two additional circumstances coincided to make the move possible: the U.S. government offered \$20,000 for the construction of school buildings if another party would donate land for the school, and a group of citizens from Salem eager to attract federal money to jump-start the local economy donated 171 acres of land just north of town, the site of present-day Chemawa.

The school opened its doors on October 1, 1885, as the Salem Indian Industrial School. It assumed a series of names—Harrison Institute; Salem Indian School; United States Indian Training School; Indian Industrial School; again in 1909, Salem Indian School; and finally, Chemawa Indian School. While the source of the name “Chemawa” remains a topic of debate, the name existed in reference to a location and possibly a band of people long before any school was built there. Evidence suggests that Chemawa was once a campsite for a band of Kalapuya Indians, a group who thrived in the Willamette Valley for centuries only to lose 92 percent of their population to European diseases between 1838 and 1841. In 1930, Chemawa Indian School’s annual, *The Teepee*, offered the following summation of theories on the name’s meaning:

It is said that the word “Chemawa” is from the Calapooia language meaning “a place where no one lives.” And again it is claimed that the name is from the Chemeketa tribe of Indians and means “Happy Home.” There has also been advanced the theory that the name was taken from the Chinook language and that originally the name was “Chewawa,” the “che” meaning new and “wawa” talk or language—in other words, “new education.” In the course of time it is suggested that somebody blundered and the first “w” in “Chewawa” got changed to an “m,” thus making the name “Chemawa,” as at present known to all.¹⁹

A more recent consideration of the native language sheds further light: in the Santiam Central Kalapuya dialect, Chemawa means “place of low-lying, frequently overflowed ground.” Such places were often good sources of camas, a critical root crop for local peoples. Kalapuyans applied the term Chemawa to at least three different locations in the Willamette Valley: a prairie north of Salem (near Lake Labish and what would become Chemawa Indian School); a place near Forest Grove; and a place near the town of Independence, just southwest of Salem.²⁰ Recently, Chemawa students themselves embraced the Kalapuya etymological concept of “happy home” in their production of the “Happy Home” video, designed to complicate the idea of “home” and showcase how they feel about attending Chemawa today.²¹

A common theme in the official rhetoric surrounding the inception of the Indian boarding school system was that of economy. To maintain itself, Chemawa needed a land base large enough to produce the requisite food to sustain its student body. Rather than returning home during the summer months, students were hired out to work in local hop fields. After a season of picking hops, they

received half of the wages paid to them by landowners, the other half being used to secure additional acreage for the school. School administrators justified the use of student labor to purchase school real estate by touting the practice as a means of inculcating a Protestant work ethic in the students.²²

The campus expanded to more than three hundred acres by the turn of the century, and the student body increased accordingly. By 1920, the school enrolled nine hundred students from ninety western tribes, with nearly a third of the students hailing from Alaska. At this time, the physical plant consisted of sixty-six buildings and more than four hundred acres of agricultural land that contained a variety of crops, orchards, and gardens. Rich soil, ample moisture, and the good drainage of the Willamette Valley provided exceptional resources for the vocational component of the school's "half-and-half" (academic and vocational) curriculum,²³ and Chemawa attracted students from throughout the West.

To be admitted, students needed to be at least one-quarter Indian (a blood quantum law), pass a physical examination, and have their parents' consent. The regions from which students came fluctuated over time as the Bureau of Indian Affairs adjusted its educational policies and strategies. From 1925 to 1960, Alaskan Natives were not allowed to enroll, barring a few emergency situations. From 1957 to 1960, the Navajo Project mandated that Chemawa provide education for Navajo students, who were without schools in the Southwest, rendering Chemawa a Navajo-only school for several years. Between 1960 and 1967, Chemawa admitted only Alaskans and Navajos. In 1967, the Indian Bureau ended the Navajo Project.²⁴ Students from the Pacific Northwest began attending Chemawa the following year, and today Chemawa educates more than four hundred students from seventy tribes in fifteen states.

Academic instruction at Chemawa underwent several structural changes during the school's initial development, but music remained a constant, with many forms of musical expression always present on campus. The first graduates received the equivalent of a fifth-grade education. In 1888, an eighth-grade curriculum was instituted, and in 1917, this was expanded to a ten-grade progression. In 1926, Chemawa finally expanded to include a full four-year high school, with total enrollment approaching a thousand students. The primary grades were phased out by 1933, though in 1936 younger children were again allowed to attend Chemawa while receiving treatment for conjunctivitis.²⁵

As we have seen, at the time of Chemawa's inception the school's goals were overwhelmingly assimilationist. The residential schools were charged with integrating the Indian population into the general society through education, in effect swallowing up the students into the Euro-American social order. As students from disparate homelands encountered each other, however, they were prone to

engage in cultural mixing, sharing the stories, songs, and foodways of their home communities and forging new intertribal relationships. Not only did these new alliances help give birth to the modern Pan-Indian movement, but they also posed serious impediments to the schools' indoctrination processes. Students who developed a sense of shared identity as Indians could sustain a coexistence of Indian and white beliefs and practices within themselves, fend off undesired indoctrination attempts, rely on each other for emotional support, and reinforce Indian values. School administrators quickly realized this and that, while Christianity, vocational training, and academic classes might reach an Indian's head and hand, a deeper, more lasting assimilation could take place only if a way was found to reach the Indian heart.

Music promised to provide just that intimate access. School officials knew that music had always been important to Indian people, figuring prominently in feasts, rituals, and day-to-day life. They hoped to replace tribal music forms with "proper" forms of music, in the process instilling ideas of order, work ethics, gendered behavior, religion, and patriotism. Through music making—the right sort of music making—students could be thoroughly transformed from the inside out, and could then share evidence of that transformation with the greater community through concerts and recitals. On occasion, the music making prescribed by school officials would highlight paradoxes of federal Indian policy by romanticizing the very behaviors and Indian-ness the schools sought to eradicate. Students were enjoined to perform such popular tunes as "Red Wing: An Indian Fable" and "By the Waters of the Minnetonka: An Indian Love Song." Shy Indian maids kept campfires burning patiently, bold warriors "fell bravely in the fray," and primitive love calls issued forth to tunes that were "founded upon a Tribal Melody."²⁶

Despite these romantic images of Indian life that Chemawa musicians were made to bring alive, student choristers and band members learned, in no uncertain terms, the behaviors that Euro-American society deemed acceptable for the confines of their particular gender, race, and class. Students marched in neat formation, sought companionship at carefully scripted social dances, and received lessons on wind and brass instruments (boys) and piano (girls)—until Superintendent Reel deemed such lessons wasteful because "in all likelihood" these were "expensive instruments the students would . . . never own."

Somehow, although the music was foisted upon them, many students liked the music they performed at the school, took it in, modified it, and made it their own, using it to their benefit both during school and afterwards. For some, it provided a means of getting away for performances and breaking up the routine of daily campus life. For others, it gave them the training they would rely on after

graduation to pursue music performance professionally or as an unpaid vocation. Still others went on to teach music in other Indian Office schools.

Even though they both operated under the same institutional umbrella and with ostensibly the same mission, Chemawa differed somewhat from Carlisle in that it more closely reflected Grant's Peace Policy rather than the U.S. Army's "force policy." Many of Chemawa's students had been voluntarily enrolled by their families and tribal communities, who sought to give their children knowledge of spoken and written English as a means to protect and advance themselves. The different schools used different means to further their agendas, as a result of individual administrative leadership, the participating tribal communities, and the degree of each school's geographic engagement with or isolation from the central offices in Washington, D.C. Carlisle's physical plant was patterned on that of the prisons and workhouses General Pratt had overseen before designing his method of Indian education, including a prominent elevated bandstand, which served as a symbol of surveillance, and a six-foot fence that completely surrounded the campus. Since Chemawa, however, was first established by Wilkinson, who had served only briefly in the Indian service, the "rude wooden structures" of its physical plant more closely resembled those of a working farm, as was befitting the local community in Forest Grove, Oregon. Following the school's 1885 relocation to Keizer, Oregon, its twelve new large brick buildings and many wooden structures more closely resembled a small college campus with dormitories and extensive agricultural/vocational units. Though Chemawa certainly sought to control Indian bodies and behavior, it had no equivalent to Carlisle's "man on the bandstand,"²⁷ who claimed an omnipresent status to inspect, judge, and control student deportment. In the early decades of the boarding school system, rules regarding displays of expressive culture would differ wildly from school to school, as would the performative deployment of Indian-ness, even as the top Indian Affairs officials attempted to assert bureau-wide policies on acceptable music making.²⁸

The Chemawa campus would prove home to a diverse array of musical forms and activities, from glee clubs and pageants to powwows and garage bands. That said, Chemawa's early years were marked by Christian hymn-singing and military-style marches, with students lining up in formation and marching in a dress-parade style. The genre of music that featured most prominently in early campus life, accordingly, was the school band.

Since 1879, Indian children from all regions of the United States have entered federal boarding schools—institutions designed to assimilate them into mainstream society. Chemawa Indian School in western Oregon, one of the nation's oldest and the longest still in continuous operation, is an emblem of a system that has intimately impacted countless lives and communities.

In *To Win the Indian Heart*, Melissa Parkhurst records the history of the school's musical life. She explores the crucial role music was meant to play in the total transformation of Indian children, and the cultural recovery and resiliency it often inspired instead. Parkhurst chronicles the complex ways in which students, families, faculty, and administrators employed music, both as a tool for assimilation and, conversely, as a vehicle for student resistance—a subject long overlooked in literature on Indian education and the assimilation campaign.

Combining oral histories of Chemawa alumni with archival records of campus life, the book examines the prominent forms of music making at Chemawa—school band, choirs, private lessons, pageants, dance, garage bands, and powwows. Parkhurst traces the trajectory of federal Indian policy, highlighting students' creative responses and the ways in which music reveals the inherent contradictions in the U.S. government's assimilation practices.

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FIRST PEOPLES
New Directions in Indigenous Studies

OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS

COVER DESIGN: Erin Kirk New

COVER PHOTOGRAPH: Singing class at Carlisle Indian School, ca. 1890. Photo by Frances Benjamin Johnston, courtesy of Cumberland County Historical Society

ISBN 978-0-87071-738-3



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